



Bryce Yokomizo
Director

March 6, 2003

TO: Each Supervisor

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FROM: Bryce Yokomizo, Director

SUBJECT: ELECTRONIC BENEFITS TRANSFER (EBT) CASH ACCESS PLAN (CAP) – UPDATE (SYNOPSIS #92)

On January 8, 2002, your Board instructed the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) to evaluate the viability of using the State's Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) system to issue cash benefits for the Los Angeles County participants. At the same time, DPSS is in the planning process for the implementation of EBT for Food Stamp benefits, which is mandatory under State law. This memo provides your Board with the fourth update of our progress.

EBT Food Stamps

- The State has begun its recruitment of the 6,032 Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) retailers in Los Angeles County. Recruitment activities consist of mailers, community outreach, training, site visits, and other proactive activities to ensure that all current Food Stamp merchants are converted to EBT.
- All implementation activities, including both LEADER changes and implementation planning, are proceeding on schedule for an August 2003 pilot.
- As of February 2003, 13 counties are up and operating with EBT.

EBT Cash Benefits

- My staff continues to meet and work with interested advocate groups in evaluating each iteration of the Cash Access Plan (CAP).
- In December 2002, we received the second iteration of the CAP (the CAP Draft) which included over 4,000 cash access points in Los Angeles County. The review is proceeding on schedule.

- During January and February 2003, DPSS conducted 55 public EBT Forums throughout the County. The forums were conducted in English, Spanish, and the two predominate languages for each Supervisorial District. Surveys were passed out to participants. The result of these surveys is stated below:

Of the 9,042 participants who attended the forums, 7,236 (80 percent) completed the survey forms. Overall, the reception towards EBT was positive:

- 68 percent want to receive cash via EBT, 24 percent do not, and 8 percent are undecided.
 - 64 percent think the CAP Draft has sufficient locations for obtaining their cash, 24 percent do not, and 12 percent are undecided.
- The State and homeless advocates will be meeting with the Single Room Occupancy groups to discuss their role in an EBT environment.
 - DPSS is on schedule to file our recommendation to the Board regarding EBT cash.
 - DPSS is working closely with Board Deputies, CAO, and Auditor-Controller to encourage local financial institutions to provide surcharge free access to our participants.

DPSS will continue to provide bi-monthly updates of our EBT efforts to ensure the successful implementation of EBT for all of our participants.

BY:sk

c: Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
Chief Administrative Officer
Chief Information Officer
County Counsel
Auditor-Controller